***Hints for Successful Conferencing in the Writer’s Workshop***

**Keep it focused!**

**Don’t try to correct every single mistake.** As hard as it may be to ignore some errors, it will break down student motivation if every time they receive feedback it is an exhaustive list of errors. Stick to one or two teaching points from your mini-lessons. And, remember to highlight student success as well. It is important!

**Vary your type of Conferencing!**

**Not all of your conferences need to be one-on-one conferences!** Depending on the mini-lesson you have taught and the observations you have made in previous workshop sessions, you can sometimes do an “**over the shoulder**” conference. This type of conference is informal and can be considered a check-in to make sure all students are on task and are applying the concept taught.

At other times, you can hold a **small-group conference** in which you may need to re-teach a skill that has not been grasped by a few or work on peer revision.

Of course, other times will require **one-on-one** conferences. *For older students, it will help to read their writing ahead of time.* This way you can choose your teaching point for the conference based upon student need. Remember that your mini-lesson may not necessarily be what every student needs at that particular moment.

Also, don’t try to read the student’s whole reading piece at a conference. It will take too long! Instead, have the student tell you what they are in need of. This may take some modeling, but they will get it and be able to tell you. It is also helpful to keep a **Conferencing Record** in each student’s folder. This way you can know what the student was working on the last time you met with them and you can measure progress and needs.

**Keep a list of the skills you have taught in mini-lessons.** This way you can measure each student’s work against the skills you have taught. It will help you identify teaching points for each conference and help move students towards becoming more independent writers. Also, it is the perfect way to differentiate and make sure each student is moving along at his own pace.

**Create a Management System**

There are many solutions for keeping track of who you conferenced with and when. However, you need to find something that works for you, that is simple and easy to manage.